SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 26 APRIL 2020

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by .... [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans as well as in English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF and various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by Johan, ZS6JPL. The audio and text bulletins may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za. To join the bulletin mailing list, send an e-mail to the SARL Secretary.

In the news today:

ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR THE 2020 SARL AGM

AMSAT SA CARRIES OUT SUCCESSFUL ON THE AIR TEST WITH AFRICUBE

and

THE MAY RADIO ZS

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

We begin this bulletin with news of two silent keys.

It is with deep regret that we announce that the key of Allan Bent, ZS1BBR (ex ZS2BBR) went silent on 10 April 2020, he was 90 years old.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

It is with deep regret that we announce that the key of Brian Utterson, ZS6AE went silent on Wednesday 22 April 2020, 4 days before his 80th birthday. Brian was a very enthusiastic Radio Amateur and was a founding member and life member of the Zululand Amateur Radio Club. Later, Brian re-located to Gauteng, where he was a member of the Sandton Amateur Radio Club. He took a keen interest in the Hammies Amateur Radio Club and often invited the youngsters to his home to participate in the Hammies Sprint and QRP contests.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

PAUSE

ELECTRONIC VOTING FOR THE 2020 SARL AGM

Following the declaration of a State of Emergency for the Corona Virus Pandemic and the Regulations issued by the Government, the SARL Council made the decision to postpone the 2020 SARL National Convention until August. But the League must continue to function and certain aspects cannot wait until the AGM scheduled tentatively for August.

Therefore, at its meeting on 21 April 2020, Council approved the use of the Electronic Voting system to seek approval of the following items that were published in the 2020 SARL National Convention Booklet on 22 February 2020:

Motion - 1 Approve un-audited interim accounts of income and expenditure and balance sheet as at 31st December (Rule 11.2.5)

Motion - 2 Approve proposed budget for the ensuing year - 2020-21 (Rule 11.2.6)

Motion - 3 Approve proposed subscriptions for the following year - 2020-21 (Rule 11.2.9)

Motion - 4 Approve election of auditor for the ensuing year 2020-21 (Rule 11.2.8)

The SARL Electronic voting system will be available for you to approve four Motions by Council from 00:01 CAT on Monday 27 April to 23:59 CAT on Wednesday 6 May 2020. The voting system is available at the following address http://www.sarl.org.za/Web3/ElectronicVoting/

You can download the Motions from the above page at any time, but the voting system itself will only be active from 00:01 on the start date above and will be closed at 23:59 on the end date. Please note that you will only be able to access this system if you are a currently paid-up member of the SARL with voting privileges in terms of the Constitution. Please send any comments or queries to secretary@sarl.org.za

RAE REGISTRATION EXTENDED TO 31 MAY 2020

The RAE Manager, Noel Hammond, ZR6DX, has informed SARL News that the closing date for registration for the June RAE has been extended to Saturday 31 May 2020.

LOCAL CONTESTS IN THE COMING WEEK

Please take note that the Lock Down Regulations will influence certain outdoor activities.

The ZS SOTA Activity Day is a fun event to encourage radio amateurs to take part in the Summits on the Air (SOTA) programme. The QSO Party is open to all radio amateurs. The first ZS SOTA activity day is scheduled from 00:00 to 23:59 UTC on Friday 1 May 2020. Radio activity takes place on all bands and modes and the exchange is an RS or RST report and the SOTA reference. Upload your SOTA log to the SOTA Database as soon as possible after the QSO Party. The points for the QSO Party will be calculated by the ZS SOTA Management team from the logs entered into the SOTA database.

The Antique Wireless Association Valve QSO Party is a phone only contest on 40 and 80 metres using AM and SSB. The QSO Party takes place over two sessions. The AM QSO Party runs from 13:00 to 17:00 UTC on Saturday 2 May and the SSB QSO Party runs from 13:00 to 17:00 UTC on Sunday 3 May. Your log sheet must be submitted by Monday 18 May 2020 to andyzs6ady@vodamail.co.za The rules for both contests are in the 2020 Blue Book.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

AMSAT SA CARRIES OUT SUCCESSFUL ON THE AIR TEST WITH AFRICUBE

This week Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP and Pierre Holshausen, ZS6PJH carried out a successful on the air QSO using the AfriCUBE digital transponder. The uplink was on 70 cm and the downlink on 2 m. The first on-the-air tests were carried out a few weeks ago between ZS6BZP and Keith Laaks, ZS6TW, while the audio was good, the transponder lacked sensitivity.

Anton Janovsky, ZR6AIC, the architect of the digital transponder and Hannes continued their testing with Anton changing code and settings. He remotely connected to the transponder to work on the transponder on the work bench in

Rooihuiskraal. It was decided to temporarily remove the beacon to enable the testing of the transponder without the beacon also transmitting. During the week, more on-the-air tests were carried out between ZS6BZP and ZS6PJH and more adjustments were made.

On 21 April Hannes sent a WhatsApp massage to the AMSAT SA CubeSat development team: "Today the tests with Pierre were very successful". All the efforts by Anton to improve the sensitivity paid off. Pierre was only using 5 Watt. While the testing was ongoing, Anton has been working on the telemetry side of AfriCUBE which will be next to step in the testing process.

As soon as the lockdown is lifted, Frik Wolff, ZS6FZ will be able to construct the antenna and solar panel deployment mechanism and PC boards can be manufactured to construct an important interface board which Fritz Sutherland, ZS6FSJ, has developed.

"The transponder is a Software Radio design which, as far as we are aware, is in many aspects, a new approach", Hannes said in an interview last week on Amateur Radio Today. "We have no handbooks to consult, we had to do everything by ourselves, but I guess that is what amateur radio is all about, experimentation and self-learning. In many ways we are contributing to technology capital development".

THE RESULTS OF THE SARL VHF/UHF ANALOGUE CONTEST

From the 9 logs submitted, it was determined that 69 stations took part in the first leg of the VHF/UHF Analogue contest.

The overall results are given here, while the other results will be published in SARL News next Sunday.

1st Carl Minne, ZS6CBQ – 207 000 points

2nd Koos Greyvenstein, ZS6KSG – 55 945 points

3rd Michael Folkey, ZR4MF – 42 359 points

THE MAY RADIO ZS

The May 2020 issue of Radio ZS will be available for download from Tuesday 28 April. In this issue, Louw, ZS6LME discusses COVID-19 and Contracts, we look at Spectrum Protection and learn more about AfriCUBE. There are four articles for 'My Project' and we look at a Slinky antenna, a 5 element 2 metre antenna and an RF AM Generator. Woody, ZS3WL tells us more about the history of The South African Maritime Mobile Weather Net and we go travelling on a train and operate QRP. Read more about the 2020 Day of the YL and other YL news in the YL.Beam column. And there is more!

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to remain at low levels. There are currently no sunspot regions visible on the solar disk. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 15 to 30 m bands will, especially late afternoon, provide some good DX fun. For more information, please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

27 April – Freedom Day

1 May – Worker's Day and the ZS SOTA Activity Day

2 May – the AWA Valve AM QSO Party

3 May - the AWA Valve SSB QSO Party

5 and 6 May - Eta Aquarids meteor shower

9 and 10 May - SARL VHF/UHF Digital contest

10 May – Mother's Day

13 May – the POP Sprint

To conclude our bulletin, a quick overview of our main news item:

Following the declaration of a State of Emergency for the Corona Virus Pandemic and the Regulations issued by the Government, the SARL Council decided to postpone the 2020 SARL National Convention until August. But the League must continue to function and there are certain aspects that cannot wait until the AGM scheduled tentatively for August.

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This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

We invite clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, in both English and Afrikaans, if possible, by following the News Inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items to include in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly radio program, Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 Central African Time. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower sideband. A rebroadcast by Andy, ZS6ADY can be heard on Monday evenings at 19:30 Central African Time on 3 620 kHz. We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Herman Erasmus, ZS6CTA and read by ....

From the news team, stay healthy, adhere to the regulations and the best wishes for the week ahead.